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in Syria

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1. Sources within the Syrian Army have informed Syrian Prime Minister Khalid Azm of receipt of reliable information that preparations are under way for an armed revolt by the Kurds in the Jazirah area to begin on 27 March 1949. This revolt will be led by the Jaladat Badrikhan* group and is reported to be Soviet-inspired.
2. There are also general, but as yet unconfirmed, reports that large-scale Communist-instigated strikes and unrest** directed against Prime Minister Azm are timed to commence on 23 March 1949. The Prime Minister has been bitterly criticized, following the agreement reached at point H-3 on the Iraq Petroleum Company pipeline between Syria, Transjordan, and Iraq. Source states that there is an atmosphere of tense expectation in Damascus.

* Comment. Jaladat Badrikhan, Kurdish Nationalist leader in Damascus, long has been reported to be in contact with Soviet officials in Damascus and Beirut. See [redacted] for a recent report on his activities.

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